(a). No, Sir. The Command Area Development Programme has not been relegated and secondary importance.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) In order to further improve the performance of the Command Area Development Programme, an Advisory Committee has been constituted under the Chiarmanship of the Union Minister (Water Resources and Parliamentary Affairs) to advise on measures to increase effectiveness of the programme. Efforts are being made to strengthen the monitoring set up. This year, monitoring of the programme would be carried out through field formations of the Central Water Commission and private agencies. Steps for increased farmers' participation have also been taken.

corruption in Lalit Kala Akademy

*87. SHRI MOHAMED AFZAL alias MEEM AFZAL: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that national newspapers of all languages are full of stories concerning corruption, embezzlement of public fund, nepotism and allegations of selling of rare palm leaf paintings of Orissa by the officials of Lalit Kala Akademy;

(b) whether the Department of Culture, Government of India instituted any inquiry on the happenings in the Lalit Kala Akademy; and

(c) why the Department of Culture has failed in excercising any control over the misdeeds of the officials of the Lalit Kala Akademy?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a). Yes, Sir.

(b) Preliminary enquiries were made with Lalit Kala Akademi regarding these complaints and their comments obtained.

(c) The Lalit Kala Akademi is an autonomous organisation. Its Chairman is appointed by the President of India and the Chief Executive namely, the Secretary by the Executive Board of the Akademi. Government do not have the power to issue directives or amend its constitution. Government do not have any say in its day-to-day activities and do not exercise control over its officials.

Import of Iron ore by private sector companies

*88. SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD:
SHRI JALALUDIN ANSARI:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have allowed some private sector companies in steel industry to import large quantities of iron ore this year;

(b) if so, which are these companies and the quantity of iron ore proposed to be imported by each of them; and

(c) what are the reasons which necessitated the import?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a). Government permission for import of iron ore is not required under the current Export-Import Policy (1992—97) and such import is freely allowed.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Modernisation programme to increase the production of pig iron, sponge iron and steel

*89. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any efforts to increase the production of pig iron, sponge iron and steel through modernisation programme;

(b) if so, the details of the production